



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

|                                |                                      |                         |             |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Gainesville, Georgia                 | <b>Accident Number:</b> | MIA03LA023  |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | December 3, 2002, 15:15 Local        | <b>Registration:</b>    | N8578M      |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | Beech 35-B33                         | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b> | Substantial |
| <b>Defining Event:</b>         |                                      | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 2 Minor     |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General aviation - Personal |                         |             |

## Analysis

During the initial climb, the pilot reported the engine began making a "loud noise and lost power." The pilot attempted to return to the airport, but could not maintain altitude, and elected to perform a forced landing on a street. As the airplane approached the street it struck some wires, landed in the street, and struck several parked cars. After the accident the engine was test run, and no discrepancies were found during the engine run.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: a loss of engine power for undetermined reason resulting in damage to the airplane during the subsequent forced landing.

### Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER  
Phase of Operation: CLIMB - TO CRUISE

#### Findings

1. REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED  
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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

2. OBJECT - WIRE,STATIC

3. OBJECT - VEHICLE

## Factual Information

On December 3, 2002, about 1515 eastern standard time, a Beech 35-B33, N8578M, registered to and operated by an individual, struck wires, and then impacted with several vehicles during a forced landing on a street in Gainesville, Georgia. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and no flight plan was filed for the 14 CFR Part 91 local personal flight. The airplane was substantially damaged. The private-rated pilot and one passenger reported minor injuries. The flight had originated from Gainesville, Georgia, at 1510.

According to the pilot, he departed Gainesville, as the airplane was climbing, and had reached an altitude of 2,500 mean sea level, the engine began making a "loud noise and lost power." The pilot turned the airplane back towards the airport, but due to his location from the airport, and because he could not maintain altitude, he elected to perform a forced landing on a street. As the airplane approached the street it struck wires landed in the street, and struck several parked cars.

An engine test run was performed on the engine from N8578M, under the supervision of the FAA. According to the FAA inspector's statement, the engine was mounted in a holding fixture, which in turn was mounted to a large trailer. A test club (propeller) was installed. The engine was rotated through with the starter for the purpose of checking magneto operation. The magnetos "operated properly" during this test. Several attempts were made to start the engine, and they were unsuccessful. The engine ran briefly, but would not sustain itself. A check of the fuel system was performed and fuel was noted to be present, in pressures and quantities sufficient enough to run the engine. The engine was started again, and ran without hesitation. Oil pressure came up to 55 psi, and fuel pressure stabilized at 5.5 psi. The throttle was cycled from idle to 2,000 rpm without any difficulties noted. Individual magneto checks were performed satisfactorily. Total run time for this test was about 4 minutes. No discrepancies were found during the engine run.

The airplane's logbooks were returned to Mr. Mark Thompson, assistant Vice President for claims, on behalf of the owner's insurance company on January 22, 2003.

## Pilot Information

|                                  |   |  |                  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|------------------|
| <b>Certificate:</b>              | Private   | <b>Age:</b>                              | 58,Male          |
| <b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>       | Single-engine land  | <b>Seat Occupied:</b>                    | Left             |
| <b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b> | None  | <b>Restraint Used:</b>                   |                  |
| <b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>     | Airplane  | <b>Second Pilot Present:</b>             | No               |
| <b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>     | None  | <b>Toxicology Performed:</b>             | No               |
| <b>Medical Certification:</b>    | Class 3 Valid Medical-w/<br>waivers/lim   | <b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>            | May 22, 2001     |
| <b>Occupational Pilot:</b>       | UNK   | <b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b> | December 2, 2001 |
| <b>Flight Time:</b>              | 2800 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1700 hours (Total, this make and model), 2800 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) |  |                  |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                                      |                              |                                       |                 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b>                | Beech                        | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N8578M          |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>                 | 35-B33                       | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane        |
| <b>Year of Manufacture:</b>          |                              | <b>Amateur Built:</b>                 |                 |
| <b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>    | Normal                       | <b>Serial Number:</b>                 | CD-648          |
| <b>Landing Gear Type:</b>            | Retractable - Tricycle       | <b>Seats:</b>                         | 4               |
| <b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b> | December 3, 2002 Annual      | <b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>       | 3000 lbs        |
| <b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>   | 100 Hrs                      | <b>Engines:</b>                       | 1 Reciprocating |
| <b>Airframe Total Time:</b>          | 4783 Hrs at time of accident | <b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>           | Continental     |
| <b>ELT:</b>                          | Installed, not activated     | <b>Engine Model/Series:</b>           | IO-470-K3B      |
| <b>Registered Owner:</b>             | Ralph W. Duggan              | <b>Rated Power:</b>                   | 225 Horsepower  |
| <b>Operator:</b>                     |                              | <b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b> | None            |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|   |                                  |   |                  |
|---|----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | Visual (VMC)                     | <b>Condition of Light:</b>                  | Day              |
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> | GVL, 1275 ft msl                 | <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>         | 2 Nautical Miles |
| <b>Observation Time:</b>                | 15:53 Local                      | <b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>        | 225°             |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          | Clear                            | <b>Visibility</b>                           | 10 miles         |
| <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>                  | None                             | <b>Visibility (RVR):</b>                    |                  |
| <b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>                | 3 knots / None                   | <b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>     | /                |
| <b>Wind Direction:</b>                  |                                  | <b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b> | /                |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               | 30.2 inches Hg                   | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>               | 15°C / 1°C       |
| <b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>   | No Obscuration; No Precipitation |   |                  |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | Gainesville, GA (GVL )           | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>           | None             |
| <b>Destination:</b>                     |                                  | <b>Type of Clearance:</b>                   | None             |
| <b>Departure Time:</b>                  | 14:35 Local                      | <b>Type of Airspace:</b>                    | Unknown          |

## Airport Information

|                             |                         |                                  |                |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Airport:</b>             | LEE GILMER MEMORIAL GVL | <b>Runway Surface Type:</b>      | Asphalt        |
| <b>Airport Elevation:</b>   | 1275 ft msl             | <b>Runway Surface Condition:</b> | Unknown        |
| <b>Runway Used:</b>         | 4                       | <b>IFR Approach:</b>             | None           |
| <b>Runway Length/Width:</b> | 5004 ft / 100 ft        | <b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>     | Forced landing |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |         |                             |                      |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 Minor | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Substantial          |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | 1 Minor | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | None                 |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    | N/A     | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | None                 |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 2 Minor | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 34.272777,-83.826667 |

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Yurman, Alan

**Additional Participating Persons:** Robert Ylla; FAA; Atlanta , GA

**Original Publish Date:** February 5, 2004

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=56157>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).